

Appln No. 09/840,497
Amdt date August 12, 2005
Reply to Office action of May 12, 2005

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) An interactive television (ITV) system comprising:

a first input for receiving a first data stream for a particular television program;

a second input for receiving a second data stream for the particular television program, the first data stream having a higher priority than the second data stream; and

a processing unit coupled to the first input and the second input, characterized in that the processing unit creates a gap in the first data stream for inserting at least a portion of data carried by the second data stream, the gap being selected in a location in the first data stream so as to allow the data carried by the second stream to be effectively displayed ~~as close to a desired time as possible~~ without disrupting display of data carried by the first data stream.

2. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the data carried by the first data stream is closed caption data.

3. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the data carried by the second data stream is interactive television data including interactive content.

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4. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 3, wherein ~~the portion of data carried by the second data stream includes a~~ reveal command is inserted in the gap, the reveal command commanding a receiver to display the interactive content.

5. (Currently Amended) An interactive television system comprising:

a first input for receiving a first data stream for a particular television program, the first data system having a plurality of first data units;

a second input for receiving a second data stream for the particular television program, the second data stream having a plurality of second data units; and

a processing unit coupled to the first input and the second input, the processing unit including logic for:

creating a gap between two first data units in the first data stream;

inserting a first portion of the plurality of second data units into the created gap;

detecting another gap in the first data stream; and

electronically inserting a second portion of the plurality of second data units into the detected gap.

6. (Original) The system of claim 5, wherein the plurality of first data units are closed caption data units.

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7. (Original) The system of claim 5, wherein the plurality of second data units are interactive television data units including interactive content.

8. (Original) The system of claim 5, wherein the created and detected gaps are time slots in a television signal containing no data units.

9. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 8, wherein the created gap is as close[[d]] to a desired reveal time as possible.

10. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 5, wherein the first portion of the plurality of second data units includes a reveal command commanding a receiver to display interactive content.

11. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 5, wherein the two first data units are closed caption payload data displayed by a receiver in response to a closed caption reveal command.

12. (Original) An interactive television system including:

a first input for receiving a first data stream having a plurality of first data units;

a second input for receiving a second data stream having a plurality of second data units; and

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a processing unit coupled to the first input and the second input, the processing unit including logic for:

identifying time slots of a television signal assigned to the plurality of first data units in the first data stream;

reassigning a portion of the plurality of first data units assigned to particular time slots to earlier time slots; and

assigning at least a portion of the plurality of second data units in the second data stream to the particular time slots.

13. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 12, wherein the plurality of first data units are closed caption data units for a particular television program.

14. (Currently Amended) The system of claim ~~[[12]]~~13, wherein the plurality of second data units are interactive television data units including interactive content for the particular television program.

15. (Currently Amended) The system of claim ~~[[12]]~~14, wherein the portion of the plurality of second data units includes a reveal command commanding a receiver to display the interactive content.

16. (Currently Amended) The system of claim ~~[[12]]~~13, wherein the portion of the plurality of first data units

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includes closed caption payload data displayed by a receiver in response to a closed caption reveal command.

17. (Currently Amended) In an interactive television system, a method for merging a first data stream for a particular television program, the first data system having a plurality of first data units, with a second data stream for the particular television program, the second data stream having a plurality of second data units, ~~for transmitting in a television signal~~, the first data stream having a higher priority than the second data stream, the method comprising ~~the steps of:~~

creating a gap between two first data units in the first data stream;

inserting a first portion of the plurality of second data units into the created gap;

detecting another gap in the first data stream; and

electronically inserting a second portion of the plurality of second data units into the detected gap.

18. (Original) The method of claim 17, wherein the plurality of first data units are closed caption data units.

19. (Original) The method of claim 17, wherein the plurality of second data units are interactive television data units including interactive content.

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20. (Original) The method of claim 17, wherein the created and detected gaps are time slots in the television signal containing no data units.

21. (Original) The method of claim 20, wherein the created gap is as close to a desired reveal time as possible.

22. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 17, wherein ~~the first portion of the plurality of second data units includes~~ a reveal command is inserted in the gap, the reveal command commanding a receiver to display the interactive content.

23. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 17, wherein the two first data units are closed caption payload data displayed by a receiver in response to a closed caption reveal command.

24. (Currently Amended) In an interactive television system, a method for merging a first data stream having a plurality of first data units with a second data stream having a plurality of second data units for transmitting in a television signal, the first data stream having a higher priority than the second data stream, the method comprising ~~the steps of:~~

identifying time slots of the television signal assigned to the first data units in the first data stream;

reassigning a portion of the first data units assigned to particular time slots to earlier time slots; and

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assigning at least a portion of the plurality of second data units in the second data stream to the particular time slots.

25. (Original) The method of claim 24, wherein the plurality of first data units are closed caption data units.

26. (Original) The method of claim 24, wherein the plurality of second data units are interactive television data units including interactive content.

27. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[24]]~~26, wherein the portion of the plurality of second data units includes a reveal command, the reveal command commanding a receiver to display the interactive content.

28. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 24, wherein the portion of the plurality of first data units includes closed caption payload data displayed by a receiver in response to a closed caption reveal command.

29. (New) In an interactive television (ITV) system, a method for merging a closed caption data stream and an ITV data stream, the closed caption data stream including closed caption reveal command data and closed caption payload data, and the ITV data stream including ITV reveal command data and ITV payload data, the method comprising:

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identifying an ITV reveal time slot for the ITV reveal command data, the ITV reveal command data commanding a receiver to display ITV content associated with the ITV payload data;

determining whether the ITV reveal time slot is available;

responsive to a determination that the ITV reveal time slot is assigned to the closed caption payload data:

segmenting at least the closed caption payload data assigned to the ITV reveal time slot; and

reassigning the segmented closed captioning payload data to one or more time slots earlier than the ITV reveal time slot; and

assigning the ITV reveal time slot to the ITV reveal command data.

30. (New) The method of claim 29, wherein the closed caption reveal command data commands the receiver to display closed caption content associated with the closed caption payload data, the method further comprising:

responsive to a determination that the ITV reveal time slot is assigned to the closed caption reveal command data:

segmenting at least a portion of the closed caption payload data assigned to one or more time slots preceding the ITV reveal time slot;

reassigning the segmented closed caption payload data to one or more time slots earlier than the one or more time slots preceding the ITV reveal time slot; and

assigning the one or more time slots preceding the ITV reveal time slot to at least the ITV reveal command data.